

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Upon entry of this reply, claims 19-23 and 25-45 will remain pending. Claims 19 and 29 are independent claims.

To advance prosecution of the application, claim 19 has been amended to substantially include the subject matter of claim 24, and claim 24 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Moreover, independent claim 29 has been amended to include the same subject matter.

Claims 25 and 26 have been amended to be in more idiomatic form.

Entry of this amendment after final rejection is appropriate because the amendment includes previously considered subject matter from a dependent claim into the independent claim so that no issue of new issues or new matter should be present when considering independent claim 19. Also, grammatical amendments to claims 25 and 26 should not raise any new issue.

Reconsideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

U.S. Patent No. 4,971,696 to Abe et al. Is Not Listed On Form PTO-892

Applicants once again note that the Examiner has not listed Abe et al. on a Form PTO-892. Therefore, Applicants are once again submitting a Form PTO-1449 citing this document. **The Examiner is once again therefore respectfully requested to initial the form, and forward an initialed copy of the form with the next communication from the Patent and Trademark Office.**

Response To Maintaining Of Restriction Requirement

Applicants once again note that the requirement previously confirmed that rejoinder of the non-elected process claims is possible upon allowance of product claims, and if the process claims contain all the limitations or are dependent on the product claims. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner review the process claims, and rejoin them upon allowance of the elected product claims. Moreover, for the reasons set forth below, Applicants respectfully submit that their invention is patentable over the prior art of record, whereby allowance of all of the pending claims is warranted, and respectfully requested.

Response To Objection To Claim 24 And Rejections Based Upon Abe et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,971,696

Applicants express appreciation for the indication that claim 24 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. In response to this indication of allowable subject matter, and without expressing any acquiescence or agreement with the rejections of record, for at least the reasons previously set forth by Applicants, Applicants have amended claim 19 to substantially include the subject matter of claim 24, whereby claim 19 and all claims dependent directly or indirectly therefrom should be allowable. According, allowance of each of claims 19-23 and 25-28, 42 and 43. Moreover, process claims 29-41, 44 and 45 should be rejoined and indicated to be allowable with the allowed product claims.

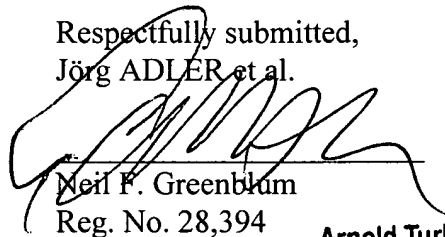
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and rejoin the non-elected claims, withdraw the rejections of record, and allow each of the pending claims.

Applicants therefore respectfully request that an early indication of allowance of the application be indicated by the mailing of the Notices of Allowance and Allowability.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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